

MEDIA RELEASE

**Attention: News Director
For Immediate Release
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**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
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Western District of Kentucky**

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SOUTH TEXAS-KENTUCKY-INDIANA DRUG DEALERS CONVICTED

**– South Texas drugs sold in Western Kentucky and Southern Indiana
– Over \$2.7 million of drugs sold in 26 months**

David L. Huber, United States Attorney for the Western District of Kentucky, announced today that **WALTER WILLIS**, age 56, of 4222 Jenny Place, Evansville, Indiana, **WILLIE GUILLERMO ESTRADA**, age 52, of 7224 Brushline Road, Mission, Texas, and **FIDEL VILLASENOR**, age 48, of 1439 Terrace Street, Muskegon, Michigan, were **found guilty** on January 24, 2007, by a federal jury in United States District Court, Owensboro, Kentucky, of conspiracy to possess with the intent to distribute marijuana. **VILLASENOR** was also found guilty of conspiracy to possess with the intent to distribute methamphetamine.

HARALIA LOFTS, age 49, of 1917 Goodwin Acres, Palmview, Texas, pled guilty, after three days of trial, to conspiracy to possess with the intent to distribute marijuana.

DAVID FREDERICK, age 47, of 7313 Swann Lane, Robards, Kentucky, **JOHN LITTLE**, age 60, of 2144 Fieldcrest Drive, Owensboro, Kentucky, **KERMIT SHRULL**, age 48, of 8512 Highway 2096, Robards, Kentucky, and **JOSE MARTIN PEREZ-ESPINOZA**, age 43, of 10223 Heather Hill, Houston, Texas, all co-defendants in this case, pled guilty before trial to the charges against them. They are all scheduled to be sentenced on April 14, 2007 at 9:30 a.m. in Owensboro, Kentucky.

The jury's verdict of guilty was returned following a six-day jury trial before Joseph H. McKinley, Jr., Judge, United States District Court.

The case was initiated when Louisville DEA agents received information from the San Antonio, Texas DEA office that drug traffickers in Texas were transporting loads of marijuana to an individual residing in Owensboro, Kentucky. Recorded telephone conversations among and between the various conspirators obtained through a court-approved wiretap confirmed the drug trafficking activity between South Texas and Western Kentucky. Over 1,100 pounds of marijuana was transported from February 2003 through April 2005. The conspiracy to distribute methamphetamine involved over 3 pounds. The street value of the marijuana was approximately \$2,640,000.00 , and the street value of the methamphetamine was approximately \$136,000.00.

Evidence at trial showed that during the time period of February 3, 2003 through April 11, 2005, large quantities of marijuana were being transported from South Texas into Robards, Kentucky for distribution in both western Kentucky and southern Indiana. **Estrada** was one of the sources of supply of the marijuana that was being transported to Robards, Kentucky. The marijuana loads were transported up to Robards, Kentucky via female couriers. **Villasenor** was also a source of supply of both marijuana and methamphetamine who had agreed to deliver 115 pounds of marijuana and 2 pounds of methamphetamine to Kentucky. However, **Villasenor** was unable to deliver the drugs, largely in part because the Kentucky co-conspirators had been detained by DEA Agents.

The evidence also showed that the loads of marijuana were delivered and stored at a residence located at 7313 Swann Lane, Robards, Kentucky, for later distribution. Upon the marijuana loads being received at the Robards residence, they would then be broken down into pound quantities by other co-conspirators who would then store them in a freezer. These pound

quantities of marijuana would then be picked up by another co-conspirator who would deliver them to local distributors. One of the biggest distributors of the marijuana was **Willis**, who sold the marijuana in and around Evansville, Indiana. **Willis** also facilitated the payment of marijuana shipments by allowing vehicles to be traded for marijuana. **Willis** was able to do this because he owned a car lot, Mayhugh's Auto Sales, located in Evansville, Indiana.

The maximum potential penalties for **Willis** and **Estrada** are 40 years imprisonment, a \$2,000,000 fine, and supervised release for a period of at least four years. The maximum potential penalties for **Villasenor** are life imprisonment, an \$8,000,000 fine, and supervised release for a period of at least five years.

The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys Daniel P. Kinnicutt and Laura Hall, and was investigated by the Drug Enforcement Administration.

All three defendants are scheduled to be sentenced before Judge Joseph H. McKinley, Jr. on April 19, 2007, at 9:30 a.m., in Owensboro, Kentucky.

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